

St George's C of E Primary School

Stamford Street, Mossley, Ashton-Under-Lyne OL5 0HT

Inspection dates 23–24 October 2012

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Children in Nursery and Reception make good progress.
- Good progress continues through Key Stages 1 and 2, especially in reading and mathematics.
- Teaching is good with some outstanding practice in mathematics.
- Teachers plan lessons well and convey high expectations of what pupils can learn and achieve.
- Teachers provide interesting activities that are usually well suited to pupils' different abilities.
- Pupils show a keen interest for learning. They behave well in lessons and around the school.
- Pupils are safe and well cared for by staff.
- Attendance has risen to above average levels.
- The headteacher, senior leaders, governors and staff have shown determination in raising pupils' achievement and improving teaching.
- Good improvements have been made since the previous inspection to pupils' achievement, subject leadership and teaching.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Pupils' attainment and progress in writing trails behind that of reading and mathematics.
- In a few lessons, teachers do not set hard enough tasks for the more-able pupils.
- Pupils do not always have sufficient opportunities to learn on their own.

Information about this inspection

- This inspection was carried out with half a day's notice.
- The inspectors observed teaching and learning in 20 lessons or part lessons.
- Discussions were held with the headteacher, staff, a representative from the local authority, external consultants, members of the governing body, parents and pupils.
- The inspectors took account of parents' views in the on-line questionnaire (Parent View).
- School policies, information about pupils' attainment and progress, teachers' plans, pupils' work and school improvement planning were examined.

Inspection team

Derek Watts, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Robert Birtwell

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- St George's Church of England Primary School is a smaller than average size primary school.
- Most of the pupils are White British.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is average. The proportion of pupils supported by school action plus or with a statement of special educational need is also average.
- An above average proportion of the pupils are known to be eligible for the pupil premium funding.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve pupils' progress in writing and narrow the gap in attainment between writing and reading and mathematics by the end of Year 6, by:
 - implementing a successful programme for the teaching of handwriting so that pupils have a fluent and joined hand by the end of Year 2
 - extending opportunities for pupils to apply and develop writing skills in subjects other than English.
- Increase the proportion of outstanding teaching and ensure that in all classes:
 - teachers always set suitably challenging tasks for pupils, particularly the more-able
 - pupils have good opportunities to learn on their own and apply their literacy and numeracy skills.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Children's attainment on entry to Nursery can vary from year to year because of the small numbers in each year group. Most year groups have children with knowledge and skills below those expected for their age.
- Children make good progress in Nursery and Reception because of good teaching and the interesting learning activities provided. Teaching and progress have improved recently and children now enter Year 1 with knowledge and skills in line with those expected nationally.
- In Key Stages 1 and 2, pupils make good progress in reading and mathematics. Attainment by the end of Year 6 is average in English and mathematics. Attainment in writing has lagged behind that of reading and mathematics. Pupils' progress in writing is as expected rather than good.
- More-able pupils are usually challenged and extended in most subjects. However, fewer pupils reach the higher than expected levels in writing than in reading and mathematics.
- Pupils have good opportunities to discuss their learning, especially when working in pairs. They make good progress in acquiring and applying speaking and listening skills. By the end of Year 6, most pupils are articulate and confident speakers.
- Pupils make good progress in reading because of the school's regular and discrete programme for the teaching of reading, particularly phonics (letters and the sounds they make). They show positive attitudes to reading and enjoy the wide range of books available.
- The school is taking positive action to raise pupils' achievement in writing. Pupils write interesting pieces. For example, in the Years 5 and 6 class, pupils make good progress in planning and writing a description of a firework scene. They used adjectives, similes and metaphors to great effect. As one pupil wrote, 'The fireworks were crystals in the night sky'. Pupils' handwriting is not as good as it should be and pupils are not always writing with a clear, fluent and joined hand. There are some good examples of pupils applying their writing skills in other subjects but this is not happening well in all classes.
- Pupils make good progress in mathematics and apply their numeracy skills well to solve problems. A Year 6 pupil said, 'Maths is like science, we experiment and learning is fun'. In a highly effective lesson in the Years 4 and 5 class, pupils used decoding skills, direction and their understanding of angles extremely well to try to solve a murder case.
- Most groups of pupils make good progress, irrespective of social background or level of ability. Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress because they receive well-targeted individual or group support from teachers and teaching assistants.
- Pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium funding are making good progress and benefit from additional teacher tuition and support. The gap in attainment between pupil premium pupils and non pupil premium pupils is narrowing.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching has improved since the previous inspection. The good teaching has had a positive impact on pupils' learning and achievement. Examples of outstanding practice were seen in the teaching of mathematics.
- Pupils were very positive about the teaching they receive. They informed the inspectors, 'teaching is good', 'the work is sometimes hard but teachers help us' and 'teachers make you more confident'.
- Teachers promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well, particularly their moral and social development. They create a positive classroom atmosphere for pupils to learn in. Adults establish strong relationships and successfully encourage pupils to work together. Pupils are cooperative, relate well to others and reflect on their learning.

- In Nursery and Reception, there is a good balance of adult led activities and those chosen by the children. There are good opportunities for children to explore and learn on their own.
- Reading skills are taught through a well-structured programme. Initiatives such as 'reading recovery' and 'better reading partnerships' are working well in raising the achievement of readers who are performing less well. The teaching of handwriting has not been as good. Pupils' use of numeracy skills to solve problems is promoted well by teachers.
- In an outstanding mathematics lesson in the Years 5 and 6 class, pupils made rapid progress in solving multiplication problems. They responded extremely well to the teacher's enthusiasm and high expectations. Tasks were challenging and matched well to pupils' needs. Pupils were fully engaged, productive and learned at a brisk pace. The teacher's skilful questioning and helpful feedback further enhanced pupils' learning.
- In most cases, teachers assess pupils' attainment accurately and use this information to plan their teaching and to match tasks to pupils' different abilities. As a result, pupils are challenged well and they make good gains in acquiring knowledge and deepening their understanding. Just occasionally, tasks are not sufficiently demanding to extend the more-able pupils. Opportunities are sometimes missed for pupils to work on their own and apply their literacy and numeracy skills.
- Pupils are set individual targets to guide their learning in literacy and numeracy. Pupils know how well they are doing and what they need to do to improve. As pupils move through the school, they become more skilled in assessing and reviewing their own learning.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils say that they are safe at school and very well cared for by staff. These positive views reflect the findings of the inspection.
- Children in the Nursery and Reception have settled well into the school. They feel safe and relate well to others. Children thoroughly enjoy the learning activities provided. They behave well in the classrooms and the outdoor areas.
- Pupils in Key Stages 1 and 2 show a keen interest in their learning. Their behaviour is good in lessons and around the school. In the classes with the oldest pupils, attitudes to learning and behaviour were extremely positive.
- The school's records of incidents show that behaviour is usually good over time. Pupils informed inspectors that behaviour for most pupils was good or excellent. In their view, only a few pupils were preventing the behaviour being outstanding.
- Pupils show a clear understanding of different forms of bullying, including persistent name-calling. They know the steps to take to deal with bullying should it occur. A few parents who completed the on-line questionnaire expressed concerns about pupils' behaviour and bullying. There are effective procedures for dealing with misbehaviour, including bullying. Pupils told inspectors that bullying can happen sometimes but teachers and senior staff quickly deal with it.
- A range of measures has been taken to raise attendance. These measures have been successful because attendance has risen from average to above average levels.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher and staff have created a positive school atmosphere. Leaders convey clear expectations of pupils and staff. Leaders and staff drive school improvement strongly and are positioned well to continue improvements.
- Since the previous inspection, the role and responsibilities of subject and other key leaders have been extended and strengthened. This action has had a positive impact on the school's success. The headteacher, senior leaders and staff have improved achievement and teaching from satisfactory to good.
- The school has made good use of local authority support, external advisers and consultants on its drive to improve. Useful partnerships with other schools and a visiting headteacher have been

formed. These have had a positive impact on improving leadership and the quality teaching.

- Leaders are effectively involved in monitoring performance and improving their areas of responsibility. English, mathematics and the Early Years Foundation Stage are all led and managed well.
 - Considerable emphasis is placed on strengthening teaching and the improvement points from the previous inspection such as raising teachers' expectations and ensuring that teachers are accountable for pupils' progress have been tackled well.
 - The appraisal of staff performance, well-planned training and the sharing of good practice all contribute to improving teaching. Senior leaders and external consultants observe teaching and provide good feedback to help teachers improve. New teachers have settled well into the school and receive effective mentoring and support.
 - The curriculum is broad, balanced with an interesting range of activities. Reading and mathematics are provided for well. Opportunities for pupils to investigate and solve problems in mathematics are a real strength. Leaders are taking positive steps to raise the profile of writing.
 - Pupil premium funding has been planned and allocated well. Small-group and one-to-one tuition is provided to help eligible pupils who are at risk of underachieving. The additional reading support is accelerating pupils' progress in reading.
 - **The governance of the school:**
 - Is supportive and has a good understanding of the school's strengths and improvement points. The governing body provides the right level of challenge so as to hold the school to account. Governors have a good understanding of recent changes and issues relating to pupil premium funding and the performance management of staff. Pupil premium funding is targeted appropriately. Statutory requirements, including those relating to safeguarding, are met.
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What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	106248
Local authority	Tameside
Inspection number	400833

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	163
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Sandra Beswick
Headteacher	Carolyn Divers
Date of previous school inspection	8 February 2010
Telephone number	01457 832496
Fax number	01457 832093
Email address	admin@st-georges-mossley.tameside.sch.uk

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